



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**SENEGAL**

## Dateline Dakar

September 2005

### Top USAID official for Africa highlights agency support for education at Senegalese high school

Lloyd Pierson, Assistant Administrator for Africa at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), visited the John F. Kennedy High School in Dakar, Senegal, to highlight the U.S. Government's efforts in Africa and USAID's efforts to improve education in Senegal. The school, funded by USAID in 1967 for girls in Dakar and its surroundings, is one of Senegal's top educational institutions.

"This school, a gift from the American people, is a lasting mark of our long-standing and fruitful cooperation with the people of Senegal," Pierson said. Currently, USAID trains teachers, provides textbooks and finances the construction of 30 rural middle schools – with active community participation – so young Senegalese can continue their education close to home.

Pierson also spoke about what the U.S. Government is doing across Africa under the Africa Education Initiative (AEI). In late June,



Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

Lloyd Pierson, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa (third from left), visits the John F. Kennedy High School in Dakar. Also pictured are school officials and US Ambassador to Senegal, Richard Roth.

President Bush announced an additional \$400 million for the continuation of this initiative to improve the quality and accessibility of basic education for children in sub-Saharan Africa.

Through the Ambassador's girls' scholarship program, USAID has allocated scholarship and mentoring services to girls coming from disadvantaged families.

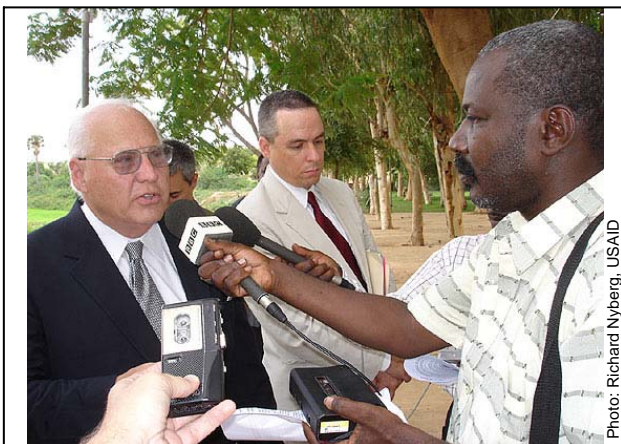


Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

Lloyd Pierson, USAID Assistant Administrator for Africa, is interviewed by a BBC journalist after a press conference in Niamey, Niger. Pierson announced additional USAID assistance for people affected by the food security crisis in the country. USAID, through its Dakar-based, regional OFDA and FFP operations as well as USAID's Accra-based West African Regional Program, provided over \$19 million to Niger in fiscal year 2005.

### USAID backs biopesticide research to combat future locust infestation

Following its assistance in the wake of last year's regional locust infestation, USAID/Senegal has awarded a \$400,000 grant for research and application of biopesticides to Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (Virginia Tech). This program will support the use of environmentally friendly biopesticides against the desert locust and grasshoppers.

### Senegal signs oil exploration contract

The Government of Senegal signed a deal to open the way for offshore exploration off the northern Senegalese coast. The renewable three-year research and production contract for oil and gas resources was awarded to the local firm Petrosen and Kampac Oil of the United Arab Emirates. The oil deal concerns an offshore bloc of 9,275 square kilometers in the coastal region of Saint Louis.

## USAID encourages trade, investment reforms in Senegal

USAID is taking the lead among a group of donors to encourage the Government of Senegal to eliminate key constraints to trade and investment. These are barriers widely seen as hindering economic growth and slowing



Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

*At the close of the AGOA Forum in Senegal, U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, announces the opening of a fourth USAID trade hub for Africa, in Dakar. The trade hub, which is expected to open before the end of the 2005, is part of a five-year, \$200 million African Global Competitiveness Initiative.*

efforts to fight poverty in the West African country. Since 1997, the U.S. Ambassador to Senegal has chaired the donor Private Sector Working Group (PSWG). In January 2005, the PSWG began developing a list of key messages and actions to support a better environment for investment and trade, for example, by calling on authorities to

handle issues such as corruption, land access delays and other obstacles.

The group formally sent these messages and suggested actions to the Senegalese Prime Minister Macky Sall in mid-June, just ahead of talks on his government's accelerated growth strategy in Washington with World Bank and U.S. officials.

The group's messages have already sparked action. President Abdoulaye Wade has announced that corporate tax would be reduced from 33 to 25% starting in January 2006 and that an outdated double-taxation system on the informal sector would be scrapped as of January 2007. In addition, after long-standing pressure by civil society, an anti-corruption clause will be included in the government's procurement code, another step to weed out illegal activity by clearly stating the rights and obligations for parties to each new contract. A related development is a set new of requirements for all ministries to draft long-term procurement plans well in advance to eliminate last-minute purchases of goods and services. Finally, for

now, the government has named one office – the Investors' Council (APIX) – to assist investors in making all procedural arrangements to set up operations in the country. It is hoped that this step will cut back the time need to open a new business by at least half. A recent World Bank study, *Doing Business*, notes that it takes 485 days for businesses to first open their doors in Senegal. USAID and the other donors will continue to work on communications strategies to encourage further actions making it easier for investors to get started in Senegal. They have already begun working closely with the Senegalese export promotion agency (ASEPEX), which started up operations in July.

## New health survey shows HIV prevalence in Senegal at 0.7%

Senegal's first ever nationwide measure of HIV prevalence has shown that 0.7% of the population is infected with HIV. Preliminary results of a new Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) in Senegal, co-funded by USAID and other donors, indicate that the national average of HIV infection is 0.9% for women and 0.4% for men. Last year, random sampling of pregnant women receiving health care services estimated the prevalence at 1.5%.

The DHS also reported that the national average for female genital cutting is 28%, which marks a decline over the past 15 years. The practice has decreased by 6% over the past 30 years, a bit more than one generation. Prevalence is 30.6% in women 45-49 and 24.8% in women 15-19. Final DHS results, which measure a range of other health indicators, are expected out in December.



Photo: Richard Nyberg, USAID

*A child in the central town of Touba is measured recently by teams conducting a Demographic and Health Survey (DHS), which was co-financed by USAID. Final results are due out in December.*

## USAID joins private sector to boost Guinea-Bissau cashew revenues

USAID is investing a further \$300,000 in Global Development Alliance (GDA) funding to work with the private sector to bolster Guinea-Bissau's cashew production through training in quality control and marketing. Currently, cashew nuts account for 98 percent of Guinea-Bissau's export earnings.